

Getting a Grip on Grants: A “How-to,” Presentation for Park and Recreation Providers

California State Trails Conference

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Part 1: Training Objectives

- Provide overview of grant basics
- Describe how to best get organized
- Three approaches to pursuing grants
- Time saving research and organizational tips
- Seven trends to watch for future funding

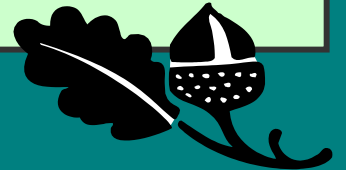
What are grants?

- Grants are supplemental funds to an agency's budget.
- Grants can come in a variety of forms: per capita, block, competitive, reimbursable, seed, loans or line-item.

Focus today is on Competitive grants

Grant Funders include:

- Individual giving
- Public and private foundations
- Corporations
- Charitable organizations
- Governmentally funded



Grants that are publicly financed can be:

- Formula or “Block” grants
- Competitive, project, categorical and research based
- Grant guidelines or “RFP’s” almost always are governmentally based



Grant Programs Administered by the Department of Parks and Recreation

- Land and Water Conservation Fund*
- Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program
- National Historical Preservation Fund
- Habitat Conservation Fund*
- 2000 Bond Act (Proposition 12)*
- 2002 Resources Bond Act (Proposition 40)*
- Off-Highway Fund
- Recreational Trails Program*

* OGALS may be able to provide information on these programs,
916 653-7423, www.parks.ca.gov

Now we know where grants come from, but *what* can they be used for?

- Capital projects (acquisition, renovation and development) e. g., interpretive signage, trail bridges, and retaining walls.
- Maintenance funds typically not available through governmental programs.
- Program funds may be found best through law enforcement, health and welfare and social services agencies, along with charitable organizations.
- Difficult to find funding for planning, administration, CEQA and operations.

First Step - Get Organized

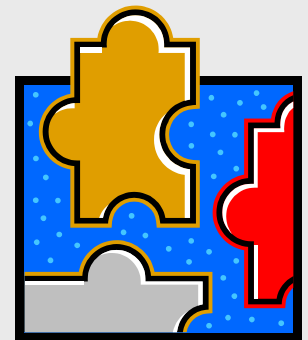
- The decision to pursue a grant involves much thought and deliberate action, and often is a team decision.
- Decide if benefits outweigh the cost of taking the time and providing the effort.
- Remember to factor time in for accounting and project management if successful.

Three Approaches to Pursuing Grants

1. “*Master Proposal*”; submit parts or phases to various funders.
2. Narrow your focus based on location, populations served, types of support and program or project ideas.
3. Locate funding sources available to your agency and identify projects which you will be competitively well-suited.

Let's talk about Grant Research...

- Become familiar with the funder's goals, mission and policies.
- Speak to your colleagues and professional associations for advice.
- Speak to a project officer about their agency's mission and your project.
- Contact the non-profit resource center
- Review grant web search sites.



Favorite Website Search Engines and Sites

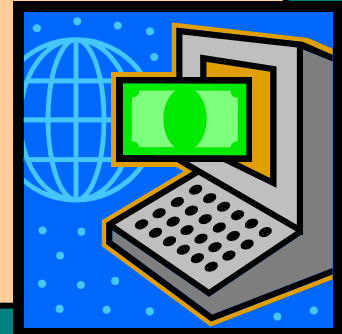
1. Review grant web sites such as the Governor's Office of Innovation in Government http://www.iig*
2. Federal Programs <http://grants.gov/natural.html>
3. TechSoup <http://www.techsoup.org>
4. N-Power <http://www.npowermichigan.org>
5. Coyote Communications <http://www.coyotecom/tips>
6. GuideStar <http://www.guidestar.org> and <http://www.guidestart.org/news/newsletter>
7. Network for Good <http://www.comsearch.net/usa>

* Caution, site links need further research or may not be entirely up to date.

Researching Program Funding at Foundation Centers and Libraries

Foundation resources include:

1. Nonprofit Resource Centers
2. The Foundation Directory <http://fdncenter.org>
3. The National Data Book of Foundations
www.nonprofits.org
4. The Foundation Grant Index CD-ROM
5. The FC Search CD-ROM database



Professional Grantwriter?

Grantwriters are known to do much of the grant research on a project for a retainer or project fee. You may be able to do much of the preliminary work yourself by talking with a project officer about your proposed project.

A list of grantwriters can be found at the **Nonprofit Resource Center**, 916 264-2772 or speak to your colleagues for their suggestions.

Final Thought on Funding Program Research

- Funders want you to fulfill their mission by having you provide a solid proposal that will help them meet the needs of their organization.
- Be aware of submittal requirements such as deadlines, CEQA, ADA, attachments and format.



Seven Trends Funding Will Follow

1. Obesity
2. Terrorism and Homeland Security
3. At-Risk Youth Mentoring
4. Vanishing Landscapes
5. Graying of Californians
6. Continued Demand for Outdoor Recreational Activities
7. Partnerships

1. Obesity

Costs associated with overweight populations is estimated at \$117 billion in 2000 resulting in 300,000 U.S. deaths annually.*

As a profession, we provide facilities, programs and skilled staff as part of the solution to the obesity epidemic.

*Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity

2. Terrorism and Homeland Security

Park and recreation providers possess knowledge, skills and abilities to provide interesting, safe and healthy programs and facilities and experiences for park visitors near where people live.

3. At-Risk Youth Mentoring

Proposition 49, the After School Education and Safety Program Act of 2002 promises no earlier than 2007 to increase funding for after-school programs.

As providers of before and after-school programs, we potentially can apply for these same funds.

4. Vanishing Landscapes

Of California's 101 million acres, as of 2002, land trusts have protected 4.7 million acres.

Park and recreation professionals recognize the long overdue investment in open space and work effectively with land trusts as partners to preserve, protect, and manage these public lands.



5. The Graying of Californians

- California has the largest elderly population in the nation; 10% more than Florida.
- By 2010, 1 in 5 will be age 60 or over.
- By 2040, the number is projected to *grow by 154%!*

As providers of services to this increasingly vocal group, we will constantly need to reevaluate our program and facility relevancy.

6. Continued Demand for Outdoor Recreational Activities

Demand will continue to be high for traditional recreational activities and programs, such as walking, attending outdoor events, picnicking, trail hiking and camping.



7. Partnerships

Partnerships are essential to a winning grant proposal.

Improve your odds by presenting a solid, well-worded connection between your project and your agency's volunteers and partners.

Now for the Proposal itself:

"The best advice I like to give to grant seekers is to keep their proposal simple, make it concise, be sure it adheres to the funder's guidelines and be sure that your proposed project meets the mission and goals of the funding agency."

Jan Stohr, Executive Director,
Nonprofit Resource Center, Sacramento.

Part II: Training Objectives

1. Elements of successful proposals.
2. Key grant requirements.
3. Review the proposal evaluation process.
4. The Evaluation Process
5. Effective project management tips after you have received the grant.

First some Important Tips About the Funding Program Intent

- Review program language in the procedural guidelines
- If applicable, review the statutory language
- Look for key criteria and how the terms are used

Other Writing Considerations

- Use your narrative to “paint a picture.”
- Be sure to address elements related to transportation, public access and the impact your proposal will have on your community.
- Speak from your heart.



Regarding Your Proposal

Best advice:

Be concise and thorough; answer all questions with well thought-out responses; describe your methodology, and be absolutely clear with your budget and time table.

Why the Proposal is so important

The proposal explains why a project is being undertaken, what will be accomplished, and who or what will benefit.

Be ready to document your agency's strengths in managing ongoing costs and conducting public outreach.

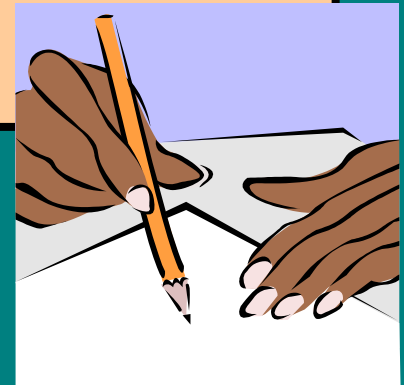
Nine Fundamental Proposal Components

1. The Cover Letter
2. The Proposal Summary
3. The Project or Program Introduction
4. Defining the Need
5. Program Method or Activities, and Staff Qualifications.

6. Project evaluation

7. Identify future and long term funding

8. Budget proposal



9. Appendices, such as:

Maps, tables, photos

Agreements, MOU's

Resolutions of Support

Letters of Support

Consistency with Park Master Plan

Flow charts and milestones

Articles of Incorporation

Nonprofit status 501 (c) (3)

Resumes

Glossary of Terms

Help with Key Grant Components:

- CEQA compliance documents
<http://ceres.ca.gov>
- ADA compliance <http://hr1.blr.com>
- Census and Demographics
www.census.gov/
- Land Tenure

Application Format

- Follow guideline directions (number pages, length, copies, signed, font, etc.)
- Consider including a Table of Contents
- Allow for ample margins and avoid clutter
- Use tabs or other section separators
- Keep binding simple
- Don't use professional jargon

Before you Submit your Application:

- Have someone not familiar with your project look over your proposal.

Do they understand it and *why* it needs funding?
Do they understand the *sense of urgency*? What questions do they have about *perceived 'gaps'* in materials or in follow-through? Does the request appear reasonable?

The Evaluation Process

Evaluators select projects with a clearly defined purpose that can be accomplished, rather than projects that attempt to address multiple priorities and are ready to go.

Nine criteria: clarity, completeness, responsiveness, internal consistency, external consistency, understanding of the problem, agency capability, accountability and realism.

Comments You Never Want to Hear an Evaluator Say:

1. “What the *heck* is this?”
2. “They can do this when?”
3. “What a shame that this came in after the deadline.”
4. “This is a mess. Didn’t they read the instructions?”
5. “So they want to fund an all expenses paid trip to Maui. Hmmm,something’s fishy.”
6. “Where’s the CEQA material ?”
7. “Okay, I give up. I can’t figure this one out.”
8. “Hey Joe, you gotta come and look at this one!”
9. “This would have worked if they kept it under x\$.”
10. “I give up.”

Five Common Reasons Why Proposals are Rejected:

1. Applicant did not follow the guidelines
2. Application lacked credibility.
3. Project or program was not adequately or clearly explained.
4. There simply was not enough money to go around.
5. Project appeared too ambitious for the projected cost; budget cost estimates were poorly supported and the applicant did not appear ready.

You Got the Grant, Now What?

The next step is administering the project and grant funds wisely — the *really* hard part!

Project Management Tips

- * Each agency will tell you what they need for their records. Develop a work plan.
- * For contract amendments, be sure to get them approved before work occurs and/or costs are incurred.
- * Project reports fill several functions:
 - Accountability and project management
 - Public relations
 - Fundraising

Ten Tips for Staying Ahead of the Grant Record Keeping Process

1. Be honest — report errors as soon as they are discovered.
2. Periodically meet with your project officer — check in to see how things are coming, review project changes and answer questions about timelines.
3. Take lots of notes and photos — when writing your final report, these will come in handy.

4. Thank the grant donor
5. Save all news articles and press releases
6. Follow instructions
7. Keep it simple
8. Review project expenses each month
9. Keep in touch with your funding agency
10. Agency credibility is very important

Accessing Articles and Publications and Other Technical Assistance Material

www.parks.ca.gov, click on Grants and
Bond Acts or Planning (gray bar to the right
of screen) Planning Division, Park and
Recreation Technical Services